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789 insure that they and their animals remain brisk and alert. Another age-old ritual is the procession in celebration of the burial of winter which is still in existence today in its ancient form, although most processions now seem to have taken on ecclesiastical appearances. Another ritual performed frequently by the Magyars is the custom of walking around a person or object feared, making thus a magic circle; for example, an accused person tries to walk around the state's witnesses before his trial begins.

[372] There is an important group of folk customs which center around fire and water. Fire is a chief element in many customs aiming at the warding off of evil forces and purification. In particular, the customs connected with quarterly celebrations feature fire in some form. There are places in Hungary where the fire for the Easter Sunday "burning of Pilate" is lit with flint instead of matches or even more primitive methods such as rubbing together two sticks of wood. Ceremonial water is in many cases now holy water brought from the church.

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755 In the peasant's spiritual life, religion and superstitions are inseparable. The following random examples illustrate well this

important facts: burns are treated with the recitation of the "Our Father"; when the phrase "as it is on earth" is reached, they point with their finger toward the ground as if to show the disease in which direction to leave. Many superstitious actions have to be performed on certain religious holidays; for instance, the unmarried girls take after the midnight mass on Christmas Eve a mouthful of holy water home from the church and wash their faces with it before going to bed. It is believed that the persons who appear in their dreams to wipe the water from their faces will be their future husbands.

Most of the countless superstitions of the Magyar peasants have their international equivalents, especially those which can be traced back to Biblical sources (the ill fate connected with Friday or the number 13) and also others of the following varieties:

Those connected with iron and its production, such as horseshoes bringing luck, and magic actions with iron tools which avert mishaps and natural disasters and which can be used against the evil influences of others (rontás 'bewitching') and for healing of animals.

Parts of the human body or anything connected with it represented, to the primitive mind, the entire human being, hence the great mass

ANNEX "A," Subparagraph 1k, Sociological Background

RELIGION

The population of Hungary is predominantly (65 per cent) Catholic. 162 795
Calvinists are second in importance (20 per cent), while Lutherans and Jews represent five per cent each, and the number of Unitarians and Greek Catholics is very small. None of these denominations is linked today with specific ethnic groups (there is, however, a preponderance of Calvinism in the Kiség); their geographical distribution is relatively even, with the percentage of Protestants rising slightly toward the east. Regardless of church adherence, 771 756
the present-day Christian religious life of the Magyar peasants still shows the relics of their ancient faith.

The primitive religion of the Magyars was shamanism associated with a kind of animal-totemism. Sorcery played an important part in their spiritual life and soothsayers held key positions in the retinues of the tribal chiefs. We have little material evidence of this primitive religion; no drums or other accessories of shamanistic rites used by the Magyars' ancestors have ever been found. However, the essentials of their funeral rites, as revealed [764]
by excavations, accord exactly with the shamanistic ceremonies of Inner-Asiatic tribes.

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The evidence supported by linguistics and modern folklore is even more conclusive. Many ancient personal and clan names (e.g. Gyula) have a totemistic derivation and similar evidences appear in the legends concerning the origins of the Magyars and their kings (cf. Subparagraph 1b)[1]. One of the most important motifs in Magyar folktales, "the tree reaching into the skies," also has its shamanistic equivalent. The tátos and garabonciás, Magyar folkloristic varieties of the shaman, fight in the air as do some antagonists in the shamanistic conception of the universe. Ancient nursery rhymes mention healing with drums. Other shamanistic motifs survive in popular customs and superstitions.

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In the primitive religion of the Uralic peoples, there was an intimate contact between the faithful and the spirits they worshipped. The relation between the Magyar peasant and God -- or between the peasant and the saints as intermediaries -- is a personal one although it would never attain the familiarity which exists between the Ob-Ugric peoples and their deities. These people feel a definite reciprocity between themselves and their idols: they pay the sacrifice and the idol who refuses the demanded assistance suffers their wrath. The Magyar peasant no longer pays sacrifices, unless in the form of candles lit or masses offered on the altar of the saint, but he is convinced that certain prayers and actions will result in the

[1] [see cat. 116, p. 7 -- Analyst]

granting of his request and he also feels offended if his prayers are unsuccessful, like the peasant of the well-known anecdote who went out to his fields during a hailstorm, grabbed a pole, and started to demolish the already damaged crop, shouting, "Come, Lord, let's see what the two of us can do!" 771

With the conversion of Prince Géza and the relentless missionary activity of his son, Saint Steven, and his successors, the original shamanism as the form of public worship was crushed. Nevertheless, the ancient religion continued to linger on and reports from the subsequent centuries, especially documents of witchcraft trials, indicate that among the people it still existed. Of course, this religion today is completely extinguished. However, many of its features survive in Christian practices (cf. the section on the annual ceremonies, Subparagraph 1h)[1] and in customs which are today considered as more superstitious than religious proper. 756 771

After the reformation relations between the Christian denominations in Hungary have developed toward a close mutual understanding. Transylvania, the little Hungarian principality, was the first to codify freedom of conscience in Europe. In the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth and partly the eighteenth centuries in Hungary, the wars and rebellions always had a certain religious undertone although never to the extent experienced by Western Europe in the Wars of Religion during the same period. Later, the 798

[1] [See cat. 116, pp. 83-86 -- Analyst]

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Although extracurricular classes in religion are now permitted, the local Communist authorities not only wage intensive anti-religious and anti-Church propaganda against them, but they also try to use every means of coercion to keep parents from sending their children to these classes.

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Since the 1948-49 wave of persecution, ecclesiastical authorities have been forced to compromise; they have agreed to sign acts of loyalty and to tolerate the government sponsored "peace-priest" movement. Nevertheless, in the rural areas, resistance to Communism is still centered around the local church. In spite of the official attitude, there are no signs yet to indicate a relaxation of the devotion or the stubborn adherence to the church of the traditionally pious Magyar peasants -- men and women alike.

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Among the peasantry, the teaching of the basic tenets of religion to the child has been traditionally the mother's duty, and the growing child can observe, at home, the example of his elders. Meals, important activities and everyday labor are always introduced and followed by a short prayer. At the table, the sign of the cross accompanies the cutting of the fresh loaf of bread. When church bells ring, the women cross themselves and men remove their hats. The Catholic home always displays religious pictures and a font; Protestants ornament the main living room with the family Bible.

778 795 at least a dozen other local churches, e.g. Szeged-Alsóváros and Hajós, which attract the flock not only of the village but also of the neighboring regions on account of certain powers that are attributed to their saints.

[788] The pious peasants often plant crosses at the crossroads and at the boundaries of their villages; when they pass by, they sign themselves with the cross. Larger towns feature calvaries (kálvária), open air representations of Christ's sufferings which are visited by the faithful especially during Lent.

576 771 The sayings common among the peasantry also reveal their deep religiousness. Greetings, for example, of the jó napot 'good day' type are always returned in the country with adjon Isten 'may God grant you.' The greeting Dicsértessék a Jézus Krisztus - Mindörökké, amen is very common among the Catholic peasants; it is of purely ecclesiastical origin, a direct translation of Laudetur I. Ch. - In aeternum, amen. Moreover, all of the more elaborate types of greetings refer to God and are actually derived from blessings.

796 795 Processions are common among the Catholics. On major holidays, especially on Easter and Corpus Christi Day, the clergy and the faithful march through the main streets of the town, carrying square gonfalons with pictures of saints, candles and the Holy Sacrament, singing hymns and praying. Before harvest time, a procession goes out to the fields where the blessing of the crops takes place with the assistance of the whole village. Processions

nowadays, are often prohibited by the local Communist authorities or simply limited to the square around the church or even to the interior of the church. 795 [796]

The Protestants, besides worshipping on Sunday in their church, often gather in their homes in the evenings and read the Bible, sing hymns, and tell pious stories. [771] Hungarian folklore is rich in legends and tales of which a common subject are the wanderings of Christ among the peoples in the company of Saint Peter. [538]

The celebration of the Catholic parish feast is an occasion for joyous festivities in which the non-Catholic inhabitants also take part. [796]

Intermarriages between Catholics and Protestants are frequent in spite of the restrictions imposed by the Catholic Church which require a reversalis, [585] a document in which the non-Catholic party agrees that children issuing from the marriage shall be brought up in the Catholic faith.

Although there are no permanent sects in Hungary that preach healing by faith, men and women who claim to have charismatic virtue and to heal through laying on of hands and prayer arise occasionally among the peasants and acquire a local and short-lived renown. They are called javasember or javasasszony. 756

With the 1945 land reform and later decrees, the Catholic Church has lost its large estates and even the land owned by local parishes were partly 659 793

659 793 distributed. The State, in return, pays a small amount (kongrua) toward the support of the clergy, the payment of which is conditioned by the individual priest's signing the oath of loyalty to the regime. The bulk of the income of the parish priest (plébános) must therefore come from the parish, who willingly support their priest in spite of their own financial problems. This economic dependency of the plébános upon the members of his church has not caused the loss of his disputed but so far unshaken prestige among his flock or even among the entire population of the village.

[795] As for the organisation of the churches, the Catholic hierarchy is headed by the Primat of Esztergom who presides over the Bench of Bishops comprising three archbishops and fourteen bishops. The highest authorities of the Protestant churches are the synods held periodically; their highest administrative body is the konvent. There are four general districts, subdivided into counties which conform to the territorial units of the state administration.

771 665 The still powerful impact of the Church upon public life was demonstrated in recent years by the returns of the 1947 elections in Hungary. The completely inexperienced and unorganised Demokrata Néppárt, which had

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been founded a few weeks before election but which enjoyed Church backing, emerged the strongest party among the peasants and the second strongest party in the nation as a whole--all this against heavy odds of Communist violence and fraud at the polls.

2:Paloczy-Horvath H- 3 (no date)1944 EC1 Hungary EC1

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when there was less work, was he able to go in a little boat to the marsh, which he had known since childhood, and fish, catch things, lay traps, shoot game? Did he go barefoot? Did he know about many charms? Did he visit some aged "charmer" who still spoke with the Old God, Ukkon, the Ever-Lord? Did his women-folk weave? And how did they make colours? Did he have a big wedding feast?

Being curious in this way and listening a lot to our poets, we know what kind of a people we were at the end of the fourteenth century.

Our country was Christian. We were not. We prayed to the new God; we liked Christ—though we heard little about him—and loved Mary. But we knew that the Forest-Spirits, the Ever-Lord of the marshland, the Fairies, the Nightmare Witches who sit on your chest, the Iron-Nosed Witch, and many, many others were also very important. Some of us told the priests at confessionals that we sacrificed to one of these, or visited one of the Charmers, and then we had to say many prayers to the new God or we had to fast.

Christianity was more of a superstition with us. We were slowly losing our old beliefs and were not quite at home in the religion of our lords. We did not like the priests. They were covetous. Many of them were gluttons and lechers. Our lot became worse. Work grew harder. Our lords persecuted us more and more. We who lived on barter, who gave everything in kind to the King, the Church and the lords—wheat and barley and maize, and oat and milk and labour—now had to learn to sell and buy for money. We lost by selling and lost by buying. The merchants and the lords knew how to sell and buy. But we had to pay taxes in money. Buying and selling was bad enough; but then, our kings sometimes coined good money and sometimes bad. In the years when the King coined bad money we had to sell just as much as in "good-money years". But our lords and the Church accepted taxes only when we had good money. Even the King forgot to collect taxes in "bad-money years". There was King Sigismund, who always had financial difficulties. He sold many frontier villages to foreigners. Then he coined bad money.

We were uneasy and bewildered; full of worries. We did not know how to appease the land, the fields, the forests and marches; we did not know whether to be faithful to the old Gods, beliefs and ways, or the new. This was alarming enough. Then beheading. Then the prohibition to move about the country. Then buying and selling. Good coins, bad coins.

9: Eppstein S-4 (no date) 1945 EC1 Hungary EC1

latter, however, still possess much wider powers than an English County Council. 631

Budapest and a few other large towns rank as Counties. Smaller towns have their own councils, but are subordinated to the County in which they are situated. Each County is also subdivided into rural districts, and these again into communes, which form the lowest grade of administration. Each commune, or village, has its own elected Council, but also a clerk or notary, who is an official of the County.

The police consists of two bodies: the gendarmerie for the rural districts, who are a military body, carrying firearms and wearing splendid feathered hats; and the ordinary police in the towns. The Nazi-controlled Government of 1944 began to 'militarize' the police also. 625

THE CHURCH. The Church counts for a great deal in Hungarian life. On Sundays almost everyone living within reach of a place of worship goes to Mass or the Protestant service, as the case may be. Especially in the country districts, the religious ceremonies are the chief occasions of the year. A very characteristic sight in Catholic districts is a long procession, consisting of most of the population of an entire village, walking slowly along the road, led by their priests and carrying banners with religious symbols. This going in procession is known as 'Búcsú' (literally 'farewell'). 771

Hungary is a country of mixed religions, among which the Roman Catholic has the largest number of followers and holds, in most respects, the leading place. As has already been told, Hungary was con- 795

14: Evans S-3 (1950) 1953 EC1 Hungary EC1

when about half a dozen of us "padres" intruded on their work without a word of warning! When the interpreter informed them who we were, they exclaimed with joy the word "Peace." Wherever we went the people were thinking, speaking and praying for peace.

I visited the Hungarian House of Parliament and was delighted to see in their library of 260,000 volumes, including 10,000 theological books, one or two books from the pen of Dean Inge.

I lunched with Roman Catholic prelates and non-Roman bishops. They all testified to the freedom which religion enjoys in Hungary.

The overcrowded churches proved to us that there is new life in the people. I worshipped at the John Calvin Church in Budapest and heard Pastor Muraközi preach very powerfully on Jeremiah xviii, 1-8. The church seated about 1,500 and was full. The same evening I preached myself to a full church at Gödöllő.

At Debrecen we saw the famous Theological College that, according to the Basle *Nachrichten*, has been converted into a "Concentration Camp"! There were 172 students in residence and 18 were sitting their Entrance Examination that week.

There is no persecution of religion in Hungary. Roman Catholics and Jews worship freely, as they wish and where they wish. According to Canon Beresztóczy, the Roman Prelate who administers the See of Cardinal Mindszenty, five Roman Catholic Churches had been ordered to be built that month (September, 1951).

There is no persecution of science in Hungary. Professor József Varga, for instance, who was Professor of Science under the Horthy regime, is still Professor of Science under the present regime.

Throughout the entire country—and we motored hundreds of miles and spoke to dozens of people—I found full freedom to worship. Above all, I experienced an intense desire for peace. The motto of the people of Hungary may well be summed up in that adopted as a school motto at Gödöllő, namely, "A JÖVENDŐ A BÉKE EMBERÉÉ"—"The future belongs to the people of Peace."

The present pamphlet by the Rev. Stanley Evans sets out most vividly and compactly the position of the Churches in Hungary-to-day. It is a masterly survey. I commend the work to the people of Britain and the English-speaking world.

W. Bryn Thomas,
Chairman of the British Hungarian Friendship Society

793 The Bishop, János Péter, said that all was going well there.
[771] The outstanding problem was church re-education, the retraining that is to say of church workers, so that they would be really effective in a situation that was vastly different from the one in which they had received their training, and courses were therefore being run both for clergy and for lay workers. Their theological approach, he said, was in general a complex of Karl Barth and Ragaz.*

[874] The Reformed Church now has four theological colleges and four secondary schools. Its clergy were now swinging over to the cause of peace although in their general social outlook they tended to be conservative. The conservative elements as such had few constructive suggestions to offer in the present situation and so more and more the effective leadership of the church was passing into the hands of more progressive pastors.

Questioned about the Lutheran Bishop Ordass, who was released from prison before completing his sentence, Bishop Péter said that he was living in his bishop's house on a pension while his successor as bishop continued to live in his former parish. Ordass himself could have a parish if he wanted one.

346 874 The Reformed Church buildings dominate the centre of Debrecen. The cathedral is a large building of the last century and, following Calvinist custom, is rather bare. The large hymnary in the pulpit is of the new, 1948 edition. The college (where the National Assembly met in 1848 and 1945) was started in the sixteenth century, although, while some of its buildings go back to the seventeen century, most of them are of later date. It is an extremely large building and houses both the Theological College and the Boys' Secondary School. The theological course lasts five years with a further one year of practical work in parishes. There are at present 100 pupils at the college. At the time of my visit they were engaged in the work of the annual "Congregation" or meeting in which both staff and students participated, all being free to express their point of view. One of the professors was extremely eager to hear of current developments in New Testament studies in Britain.

771 In Budapest Bishop Bereczky said that the church revival, which had been discussed in a previous visit in 1949, had developed not only in small, zealous groups, but in the whole church and most of the ministers have been reinvigorated. More and more do they understand that the service of the church in a socialist country can only come from those who have some knowledge and appreciation of socialism.

874 The bishop said that the theological schools were a very bright part of the picture and his views were borne out on a subsequent visit with him and its principal to the Calvin College in Budapest. Certainly nobody could have seemed happier than the theological

* The Swiss Christian Socialist.

6: Shuster S-4 (no date) 1954 El Europe

Hungary EC1

As a result of the Regency's efforts to effect a measure of "land reform" by purchasing large estates and parceling them out to small farmers, the Catholic Church became the principal landowner in the country. It held one-eighteenth of all the arable soil, and a great variety of other tangible assets. As a rule the Church treated its tenants well—so well, indeed, that many of them viewed the possibility of "land reform" with misgiving. One could, indeed, argue that such a "reform" might well prove to be an enterprise of questionable value. Perhaps a peasant could live better by working on a large estate managed in accordance with the principles of just labor legislation than on a small plot left to his own devices. The fact remained that there was a strong demand for ownership of the soil by those who tilled it. At any rate, a thoughtful, forward-looking churchman could not view the situation with equanimity. Although the Church estates produced revenue which was needed for the upkeep of numerous religious, cultural, and charitable institutions, a strong Catholic social reform movement insisted upon a wider distribution of property. A solution was not found. Either there ought to have been "land reform" in the sense indicated, or laws should have been enacted to insure a decent livelihood to the farm worker. Nevertheless one must note that Kalot, the organization of Catholic peasant youth founded by an indefatigable Jesuit, was one of the strongest associations of the kind in Europe. It had more than 200,000 members when Hitler marched into Hungary, and its educational program was directed with intelligence and moral fervor.

Perhaps the major reason for the Church's loss of appeal to poorer citizens in many parts of Europe was not Karl Marx or Charles Darwin, not Voltaire or Hegel, though they and others undoubtedly had a good deal to do with it. Something far more tragic was the matter. The poor man drifted away because of the Church's natural but too exclusive concern

6: Shuster S-4 (no date) 1954 El Europe
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● 771 with its own rights and progress. It forgot that, although saving souls may ultimately prove to be the one thing necessary, people will not strive for spiritual redemption unless the ecclesiastical societies to which they belong accept them as they are, with a frank recognition of their needs, their aspirations, and their fears for the welfare of their children. Priests—the vast majority of them exemplary men—were tempted to think too exclusively about the great endeavor in which they were engaged. Prior to the First World War, Hungarian Catholics had an extraordinarily competent, farsighted, and saintly leader, Bishop Ottokar Prohaszka, whose services to all good causes, including social reform, were notable. He was succeeded in his influence over the nation by Cardinal Justinian Serédi, one of the most distinguished churchmen of the time; but, despite the numerous and often exemplary activities fostered by such leaders, the general situation was far from what could have been desired.

000 On the other hand, it must be pointed out that public opinion in the United States and elsewhere was far too prone to identify the Church in Hungary with "reaction." Few people took the trouble to familiarize themselves with the Christian Democratic Movement which had arisen in response to the appeal of Pope Leo XIII for social justice. Largely by reason of age-old antipathy to the Papacy, which lived on in countless minds that had forgotten both the Beast of Revelation and the doctrinal disputes of yore, there was little room in the Anglo-Saxon conception of what the postwar world was to be for any Christian social movement or organization. The term "conservative" engendered visions of mitered autocrats going about in clouds of incense to grind down the poor. This undertow of prejudice combined with general Catholic persistence in demanding that the interests of the Church be served, when other people could not possibly conceive of them as conformable

6: Shuster S-4 (no date) 1954 El Europe
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Germans. Later he denounced quite as vigorously the expulsion of German-speaking minority groups from Hungary. However, as soon as the treaty went into effect, the Cardinal and the Church were left to face the enemy unaided. It had been argued that he should have anticipated the development and adopted a more conciliatory tone; but the evidence garnered in other satellite countries shows that he would merely have made his own lot easier without changing in the least the direction in which the Communist Party was implacably moving.

The first effect of the treaty on religious activities was the subjugation of the Calvinist and Lutheran churches. Lutheran ranks had been seriously depleted by the expulsion of German "ethnic" groups. During the autumn of 1948 Bishop Lajos Ordass, undoubtedly the ablest and most courageous Lutheran leader, was brought to trial and sentenced to two years in prison. The Calvinists, on the other hand, were led intellectually by Dr. Albert Bereczky, who seemingly assented to every demand made by the State. Soon this Hungarian Protestant church heard Bishop Imre Ravecz say that "the most important and significant ordinances of the Hungarian form of society are in complete accord with Holy Writ." These developments were interpreted in some quarters as meaning that whereas the Protestant churches enjoyed complete freedom under Communist rule, the recalcitrant Catholic Church was having a difficult time because of the bigotry and lust for power which characterized its Hierarchy.

As a matter of fact, the Calvinist Church in particular was feeling the knout, not merely in outward persecution but also in inner conflict. Prior to the signing of the treaty and the Communist seizure of the government the dominant group in it was the one that had opposed the Nazis. These men, notably Bereczky, were persuaded that the traditional interdependence

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of Church and State had been evil, and that only separation could advance the cause of the Gospel. The coming of the Communists was interpreted as being in part a punishment visited upon the Church for sin. Drastic reform was therefore needed, and above all missionary effort to bring the masses to a realization of the true meaning of Christian teaching. Yet at the same time the gifted and realistic Bishop László Ravasz pointed out firmly that freedom was possible to the Church only if society recognized the value of freedom and insisted that religious education was a duty no parent could shirk if he hoped to remain a Christian. An ultimatum by the government to the Church, presented during the early months of 1948, resulted in the resignation of Bishop Ravasz as President of the General Synod and as a member of the Hierarchy. The Synod protested against this high-handed action, but in the end Bereczky gained the position of greatest prominence in the Church.

Passing over, for the moment, the situation thus created, we resume the chronicle of the Cardinal. Every new day brought disappointments. The government laid its heavy hand on the schools, the press, and Catholic Action. It induced a group of Catholics, in the name of progress, to promulgate criticism of the Primate. Outwardly it was still possible to pretend that Church and State were seeking agreement. Monsignor Zsigmond Mihalovics, director of Catholic Action in Hungary and later an exile, relates in *Mindszenty, Ungarn, Europa* that he went with a companion to attend a reception in honor of the President of the Republic late in 1947, only to find that Mátyás Rákosi, Secretary-General of the Hungarian Communist Party, was anxious to chat and have his picture taken in the company of Church dignitaries. The Party was still interested in camouflage and, as usual, was proficient in the art.

Events moved swiftly towards a climax during the summer